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October 12, 2005

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State of California  
Department of Housing and Community Development  
Division of Housing Policy Development  
Attention: Ms. Cathy Creswell, Deputy Director  
P.O. Box 952053  
Sacramento, CA 94252-2053

Subject: 2004-2005 General Plan Annual Report

Dear Ms. Creswell:

In compliance California Government Code, a copy of Lakewood's General Plan Annual Report has been enclosed with this correspondence. A separate copy of this report has been transmitted to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research/State Clearinghouse.

If you have any other questions or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Kuykendall at (562) 866-9771, extension 2344.

Sincerely,

Charles K. Ebner, AICP  
Director of Community Development

# Lakewood

## COUNCIL AGENDA

September 27, 2005

**TO:** The Honorable Mayor and City Council

**SUBJECT:** The 2004-2005 General Plan Annual Report

### STATEMENT OF FACT

In November 1996, the Lakewood City Council adopted the update to the City of Lakewood Comprehensive General Plan. The General Plan is a State-mandated document, which a city uses to plan the framework for its physical, social and economic development for up to 30 years into the future.

Government Code Section 65400(b) requires local planning agencies to provide "an annual report to the legislative body on the status of the plan and progress in its implementation." The local planning agency must prepare an annual report on the status of the general plan and should develop a monitoring program for the general plan, and when conflicts, inadequacies, etc, are discovered, then the general plan should be revised or amended to correct the problem.

This report summarizes key trends, capital improvement projects and other activities in light of the goals, policies, and implementation programs outlined in the General Plan Policy Document. The 2004-2005 General Plan Annual Report finds that implementation of the General Plan has been successfully guiding the development of the community. Furthermore, Government Code Section 65400.(b)(1) requires that the Annual Report detail the progress made towards providing housing as specified by the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA).

The Planning and Environment Commission reviewed the 2004-2005 General Plan Annual Report at its September 1, 2005 meeting. The Commission found that the implementation of the General Plan continues to successfully guide Lakewood's development.

### RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Environment Commission recommends that the City Council receive and file the 2004-2005 General Plan Annual Report.



Charles K. Ebner, AICP  
Director of Community Development



Howard L. Chambers  
City Manager

## **The City of Lakewood Comprehensive General Plan 2004-2005 Annual Report**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Government Code Section 65400(b) requires local planning agencies to provide an annual report to the legislative body on the status of the General Plan and the progress of its implementation. The purpose of the annual report is to:

- Provide enough information to allow local legislative bodies to assess how the General Plan is being implemented in accordance with adopted goals, policies, and implementation measures.
- Provide enough information to identify necessary course adjustments or modifications to the General Plan as a means to improve local implementation.
- Provide a clear correlation between land use decisions, which have been made during the 12-month reporting period and the goals, policies, and implementation measures contained in the General Plan.
- Provide information regarding local agency progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs and local efforts to remove governmental constraints to the development of housing (as defined in 65584 and §65583(c)(3)). To provide enough information to allow local legislative bodies to assess how the General Plan is being implemented in accordance with adopted goals, policies, and implementation measures.

In November 1996, the Lakewood City Council adopted the update to the City of Lakewood Comprehensive General Plan. A general plan is a State-mandated document, which a city uses to plan the framework for its physical, social and economic development for about 30 years into the future. The City of Lakewood General Plan is comprised of seven State-mandated elements and three optional elements. Lakewood's General Plan elements are as follows:

- |                |                                      |                         |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| - Land Use     | - Open Space                         | - Air Quality*          |
| - Circulation  | - Noise                              | - Economic Development* |
| - Housing      | - Safety                             |                         |
| - Conservation | - Recreation and Community Services* | *optional elements      |

Section 65400, et seq. of State law requires that an annual report be presented to the local legislative body, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, and the Department of Housing and Community Development. This report is for the review period from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005.

## IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE ELEMENTS

### **Land Use Element**

Lakewood is primarily a “bedroom community” with only a very small percentage of land area devoted to commercially and industrially zoned land, compared to other cities in the sub-region. Lakewood is almost completely developed with a build-out ratio above 95%.

### Residential Development

A goal of the Land Use Element is to preserve and enhance Lakewood’s desirable residential character. The past year has seen continued development and improvement of single-family and multiple-family residences. Table 1 below shows project now in various stages of the development process:

Table 1: Currently Planned Residential Projects

Project Address	Units Constructed	Units Demolished	Type of Project	Project Status
11736 216 <sup>th</sup> Street	16	0	Planned Development	Approved by DRB
11540 216 <sup>th</sup> Street	4	1	Condominiums	Approved by PEC
11731-33 Centralia St.	2	1	Apartment	Approved by DRB
12328 Centralia St.	1	0	Single Family Residence	Under construction
12330 Centralia St.	1	1	Single Family Residence	Under construction
11656 215 <sup>th</sup> Street	4	1	Condominiums	Approved by PEC
20741 Seine Ave.	20	9	Condominiums	Plan check
11716-28 205 <sup>th</sup> St.	10	4	Condominiums	Under construction
11714 Walcroft St.	2	1	Apartments (Specific Plan)	Approved by DRB
11610 207 <sup>th</sup> Street	9	0	Condominiums	Approved by DRB
5813 Allington St.	8	3	Planned Development	Project complete
11711-19 216 <sup>th</sup> St.	4	0	Apartments	Project complete
Subtotals	81	21		
Net Unit Activity:	60			

The development of new dwelling units provides needed housing opportunities in Lakewood, and helps the City in realizing its share of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment. Further information on this subject is found in the Housing Element section of this report.

The quality of housing stock is one factor that makes Lakewood a desirable place to live as indicated by Lakewood's low vacancy rate. After the recession of the 1990's, median home prices continued to rise. In 1989, the median home price was approximately \$204,000. The current median home price is at an all time high, spurred by a combination of factors that are common across the state. These factors include low interest rates and a shortfall of housing. As of January 1, 2005, Lakewood’s population was 83,674 (State of California, Department of Finance, E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates, 2005, Revised 2001-2004, with 2000 DRU Benchmarks, Sacramento, California, May 2005). The vacancy rate and median home prices since adoption of the General Plan are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Vacancy Rates and Median Home Prices

	Vacancy Rate (1)	Median Home Price (2)
January 1996	2.59%	\$159,000
January 1997	2.58	164,000
January 1998	2.58	178,500
January 1999	2.58	197,900
January 2000	2.59	210,000
January 2001	1.67	236,500
January 2002	1.67	268,957 (3)
February 2003	1.67	288,500
May 2004	1.67	420,000
July 2005	1.67	517,000

Sources: (1) State of California, Department of Finance, *E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates, 2004, Revised 2001-2003, with 2000 DRU Benchmark*. Sacramento, California, May 2004. (2) California Association of Realtors. (3) Average provided by GRC Associates study, October 21, 2002.

The increase in median home prices combined with low interest rates has not only helped boost home sales, but refinancing activity has resulted in a significant increase in residential improvements. Table 3 below shows the increase in building permits issued for residential projects. These projects include room additions and other remodel work.

Table 3: Residential Building Permits Issued

Fiscal Year	Number of Permits Issued
1994-1995	1,246
1995-1996	1,267
1996-1997	1,180
1997-1998	1,255
1998-1999	1,248
1999-2000	1,195
2000-2001	1,265
2001-2002	1,400
2002-2003	1,664
2003-2004	1,735
2004-2005	1,904

Source: City of Lakewood Community Development Department

### Development in the Commercial and Industrial districts

Although the Land Use Element goals are in part to preserve Lakewood's residential character, an important component necessary in maintaining this theme is providing a commercial component for the convenience and enjoyment of Lakewood residents. This same commercial component is also necessary in supplying the resources that Lakewood needs to provide critical services. Therefore, oversight of economic development and commercial land investment activities is a high priority for Lakewood. Projects such as Bubble Bee Carwash, the completion of the retail shell buildings at the northeast corner of Paramount Boulevard and Del Amo Boulevard and the completion of the second phase of Lakewood Self Storage are examples of how Lakewood is working towards its economic goals.

within the Land Use Element, and how Lakewood's commercially designated properties continued to experience expansion and reuse. There are also a number of commercial projects either in the planning or development phase. This includes new commercial centers at the northeast corner of Candlewood Street and Clark Avenue, the southeast corner of Downey Avenue and South Street, the southeast corner of Woodruff Avenue and Del Amo Boulevard, the northeast corner of Palo Verde Avenue and Del Amo Boulevard, the northeast corner of Bellflower Boulevard and Carson Street, the northeast corner of Pioneer Boulevard and Carson Street, and the northwest corner of Clubhouse Drive and Carson Street. Also, a new automobile dealership is going to be located at the southeast corner of Cherry Avenue and 36<sup>th</sup> Street, and a new carwash is under construction at the southwest corner of Bloomfield Avenue and Centralia Street. A new Chipotle restaurant is being built at the northeast corner of Lakewood Boulevard and Candlewood Street.

Properties designated by the General Plan for industrial land uses have also experienced a limited amount of redevelopment. Construction of a self-storage facility with a caretaker's quarters continues at the southwest corner of Paramount Boulevard and Kessler Road. This project will convert the former Huck International building for self-storage and will add new building area. There have been no General Plan Amendments during this review period.

### **Circulation Element**

The focus of the Circulation Element is to promote the efficient movement of people and goods. Through the Capital Improvements Program, the City continues to make improvements to its system of streets and highways as it carries out the goals of the Circulation Element.

During the 2004-2005 fiscal year the City of Lakewood Public Works Department resurfaced approximately 10.5 miles of residential streets.

### **Housing Element**

The purpose of the Housing Element is to identify and make provisions for existing and projected housing needs. The Housing Element is an official policy statement with regards to the types and quantities of housing to be provided, it analyzes existing housing conditions in light of the constraints that are faced by the housing market, and it identifies opportunities for improving and expanding Lakewood's housing supply. The Housing Element was adopted on September 10, 2002, and was certified by the State Office of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in November 2002.

To help accommodate regional population growth, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) established Lakewood's share of the RHNA at 866 new dwelling units. As indicated in the Land Use Element portion of this report, 81 dwelling units are in the planning or construction process during this report period. Combined with the 21 units that were demolished to make way for the new units, there will be a net gain of 60 dwelling units, which represents about 7% of the RHNA. This is not necessarily an indicator of insufficient building activity. During the 2004-2005 fiscal year, 1,904 building permits were issued for single-family residences. Many of these were for adding additional bedrooms to Lakewood's existing housing stock, which helps absorb Lakewood's projected population growth.

## Conservation Element

The Conservation Element focuses on the protection and management of local resources, including water for domestic use and storm water runoff. The Conservation Element also addresses solid waste reduction and recycling. The City continues to reduce its solid waste stream in compliance with Assembly Bill 939. This is being accomplished through various recycling programs and public education. The City's Department of Water Resources primarily serves the western portion of the City. The Southern California Water Company serves the eastern portion of the City. The data in this report reflects only the Lakewood Department of Water Resources. The City purchases recycled water for irrigating the landscaping at its various parks and facilities. Due to heavy rains over the last year, the demand for recycled and domestic water production has been reduced. Table 4 shows the amount of water used:

Table 4: Annual Water Usage

Fiscal Year	Recycled Water (Acre feet)	% Change From Previous Year	Domestic Water (Acre feet)	% Change From Previous Year
1995-1996	399	-	9,157	-
1996-1997	496	24.3%	9,475	3.5%
1997-1998 (1)	367	-35.1%	8,613	-10.0%
1998-1999	421	14.7%	8,913	3.5%
1999-2000	477	11.7%	9,167	2.85%
2000-2001	404	-18.0%	8,758	-4.6%
2001-2002	444	9%	9,239	5.2%
2002-2003	441	-0.68%	9,024	-2.38%
2003-2004	421.84	-5%	9,494.32	5%
2004-2005	352.45	-19.69%	8,869.21	-7.05%

Source: City of Lakewood, Department of Water Resources

(1) Record rainfall in 1998 resulted in less water used for irrigation purposes that year.

As part of the Clean Water Act, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requires local agencies to reduce pollutant levels in storm water runoff through the implementation of policies and programs. While the implementation of the mandated Standard Urban Stormwater runoff Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) may create constraints due to costs associated with implementation, it does not appear to have a significant impact on development as demonstrated by the level of building activity of the type that is subject to these regulations. Street sweeping continues to take place on weekly, and the City continues to make oil recycling kits free to its residents. These programs help reduce the potential of pollution entering the storm water system.

## Open Space Element

Among the amenities that make Lakewood a desirable place to live is its outstanding park system, equestrian center (located adjacent to a regional trail system), and the Centre at Sycamore Plaza, which is used for social and business events. Privately owned open space areas continue to be preserved through zoning mechanisms. The landscape requirements for commercial and industrially zoned properties help ensure that adequate open space is preserved for soil permeability, aesthetics and urban forestry. Private open space for residential projects continues to be preserved by the zoning ordinance

through direct minimum square footage requirements for both single family and multi-family residential properties. The City is applying for a grant to extend the West San Gabriel River Parkway Nature Trail from its current termination point near Monte Verde Park, north towards Del Amo Boulevard.

### **Noise Element**

The Noise Element identifies and sets thresholds for various noise sources in the community. The City responds to noise complaints on a case-by-case basis. In reviewing new construction and business license applications, consideration is also given to potential noise impacts that may impact nearby uses.

If there is the potential for noise impacts, then appropriate mitigation measures are imposed. In some cases, periodic monitoring is necessary to ensure compliance with required mitigation measures. The Community Development Department uses a sound meter that is capable of storing data for future retrieval or for downloading into a computer.

### **Safety Element**

The Safety Element discusses the protection of the community from risks, both manmade and natural. Safety issues facing Lakewood include seismic activity, both direct (shaking and liquefaction) and indirect (fires and ruptured gas lines). Other safety issues include providing a sufficient law enforcement presence and fire response times.

On January 11, 2002, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued a Letter of Map Revision that restored the flood zone designation for Lakewood to flood zone "X" thereby relieving the flood insurance mandate. With the flood insurance requirement lifted, Lakewood residents found relief from the threat of flooding as well as a savings in insurance premiums.

On May 11, 2004, the Council adopted Resolution 2004-20, directing staff to prepare a Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP) in compliance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The draft NHMP was completed and forwarded to the State Office of Emergency Services and to FEMA. The draft plan is now being revised to reflect comments from those agencies. The NHMP identifies natural hazards facing Lakewood, analyzes levels of risk, and proposes action items that may be implemented in order to reduce or eliminate threats to city facilities.

The NHMP identifies earthquakes and, to a lesser extent, flooding and windstorms, as the likely natural hazards capable of causing economic losses, and it proposes action items designed to reduce damage and losses. The actions items include requiring bookcases, computers, and similar fixtures in City facilities to be seismically secured, providing natural hazard preparedness materials to Lakewood residents, and seeking grants that may be used to carry out these action items. Following final approval of the NHMP, Lakewood will become eligible for pre- and post-disaster funding.

In March 1999, the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology released a new seismic hazard map that placed nearly all of Lakewood in a liquefaction zone. The Building and Safety Department continues to review plans for new construction to check for compliance with applicable building regulations relating to liquefaction.



Lakewood contracts with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services. Table 5 below shows the total number of reported Type 1 offenses and the total calls for service, since 1996. Part I offenses include criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault and burglary. It does not include instances of larceny/theft, grand theft auto, arson or other property crimes.

Table 5: Total Reported Offenses and Calls for Service

Calendar Year	Reported Offenses (1)	Reported Incidents
1996	3,856	30,916
1997	3,363	30,045
1998	3,198	28,506
1999	2,565	22,548
2000	2,813	29,129
2001 (2)	2,928	31,613
2002 (2)	2,976	31,513
2003 (2)	2,933	33,628
2004 (2)	3,207	36,078

Source: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. (1) Reported Offenses pertain only to "Part I" offenses, which include criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault and burglary. It does not include instances of larceny/theft, grand theft auto, arson or other property crimes. (2) Data obtained from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department website.

The Recreation & Community Services Department (RCS) is responsible for the coordination of emergency preparedness, response and recovery activities of the City. City disaster response operations are coordinated in accordance with the City's Multi-hazard Functional Plan, which conforms to State of California's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) guidelines.

RCS provides training and support to City departments by training city employees in such emergency preparedness areas as SEMS, the ongoing training of the City's First Response Strike Team, the training of Lakewood residents in emergency response through the CARE Program and is an active member of the Disaster Management Board, Area E for regional disaster coordination.

### **Recreation and Community Services Element**

The Recreation and Community Services Element addresses the recreation and human services programs that are offered by the City. In addition to administering numerous recreational activities, the Recreation and Community Services Department also oversees programs designed to address the needs of seniors, families and persons with special needs.

### **Air Quality Element**

Since air quality issues are not confined by the boundaries of any one jurisdiction, a regional approach to solving air quality problems is necessary. Lakewood's Air Quality Element was derived from the Model Air Quality Element prepared jointly by 21 jurisdictions during 1992 and early 1993. Lakewood has been utilizing a variety of tools to address this issue. Reduction of construction related airborne pollutants continues to be enforced through mitigation measures assessed during the initial study

process. These mitigation measures are placed on projects as part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. Typical CEQA mitigation measures include compliance with SCAQMD regulations, including Rule 402 which specifies that there be no dust impacts offsite sufficient to cause a nuisance, and SCAQMD Rule 403, which restricts visible emissions from construction.

## **Economic Development Element**

The Economic Development Element addresses Lakewood's future economic growth in light of nearly non-existent vacant commercial land. The Element also underscores the social, fiscal and aesthetic impacts caused by blight, deterioration and obsolete commercial uses. Sales tax revenue is an indicator of an area's economy, especially where changes over time may be analyzed. Currently, there are a number of commercial development projects that have recently been completed, such as the Target department store. It is expected that the sales tax revenues generated by new businesses will contribute to the local economy, and towards making Lakewood more competitive in the subregion. Table 6 shows the annual sales tax revenues since the General Plan was adopted.

Table 6: Annual Sales Tax Revenues

Fiscal Year (1):	Sales Tax Revenues (in millions):	% Change From Previous Year:
1996-1997	\$6.74	-
1997-1998	\$6.98	3.6%
1998-1999	\$7.48	7.16%
1999-2000	\$8.36	11.76%
2000-2001	\$9.34	11.72%
2001-2002	\$9.56	2.36%
2002-2003	\$10.36	8.37%
2003-2004	\$10.9	5.09%
2004-2005	\$11.5 (2)	5.5%

Source: City of Lakewood Finance Department.

(1) The fiscal year is from July 1 through June 30 of the following year.

(2) This includes approximately \$2 million in "backfill" from the State, and is subject to adjustment.

The Boeing Company has closed a major portion of its facility adjacent to Lakewood's southwest edge. Approximately 238 acres of the site is located within the City of Long Beach, and 22 acres is located within the City of Lakewood. That property will be transformed significantly over the next several years, thereby bringing new opportunities and challenges to Lakewood. Proposed plans are to replace 260 acres of Boeing's aircraft production facility with new research and development, industrial, office, retail, hotel, and residential uses. Some aviation related uses could be retained. Boeing has sold a five-acre portion of their property located at the southeast corner of 36th Street and Cherry Avenue. The new owner is preparing plans for the development of this site for an automobile dealership.

## **CONCLUSION**

Lakewood will continue to face new opportunities and challenges over the next several years as a result of changes in the economy, the demand for housing, and addressing natural hazards. From the time of its adoption in November 1996, implementation of the General Plan continues to guide improvements to Lakewood's residents and businesses. Since the last annual report, a contract has been awarded for the

update of the Master Environmental Impact Report and a preliminary document has been submitted to the City for review. The updated document will be used in reviewing development plans and allows for accurate, expedited reviews of development applications. The updated environmental document will be presented separately under a separate report. Implementation of the General Plan over the past year found that there have been no instances of conflicts and/or inadequacies with those goals, which would otherwise require significant revisions and/or amendments to the General Plan Policy Document.